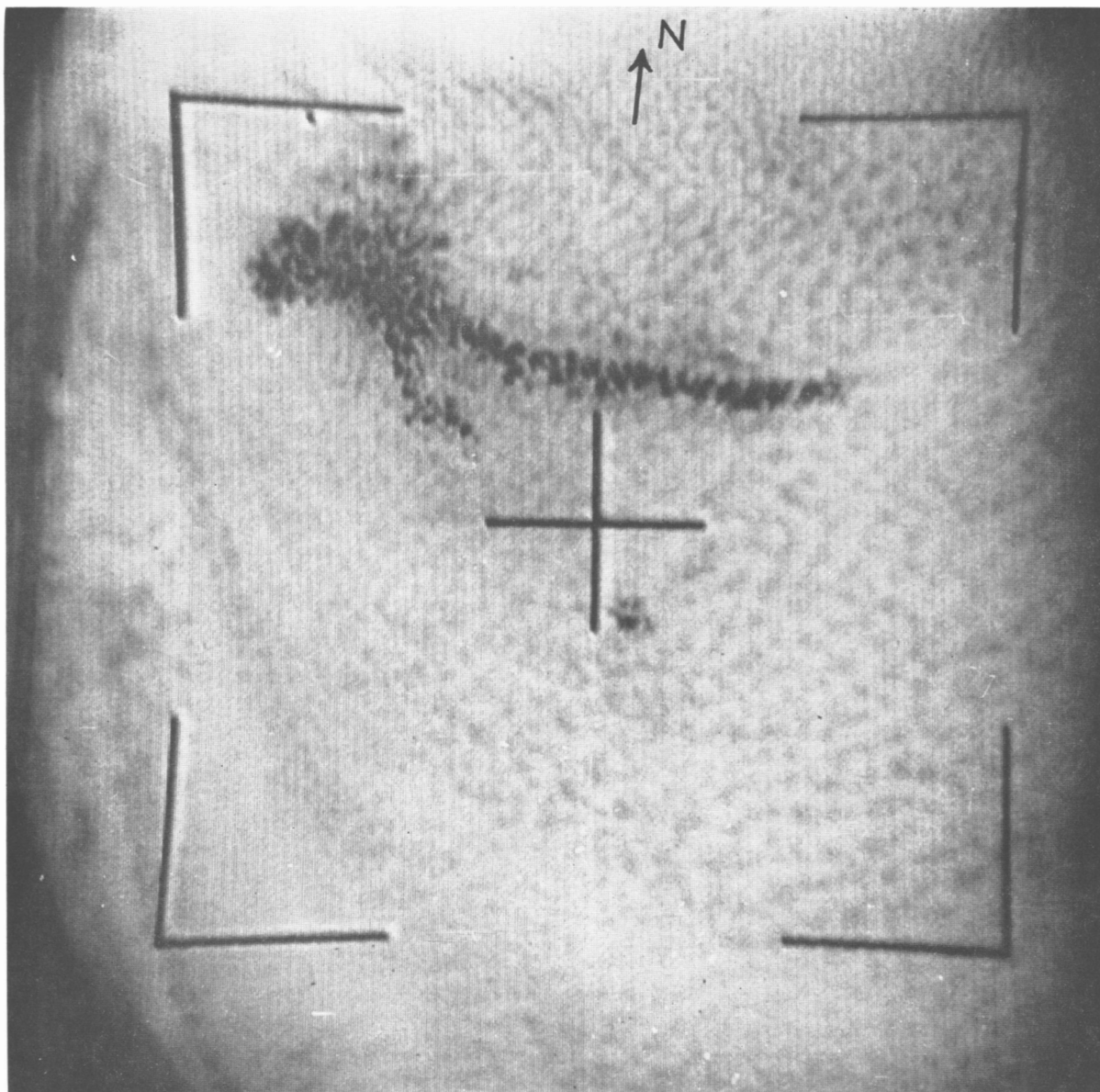


## PICTURE OF THE MONTH



This TIROS VII photograph (pass 6938-direct, camera 2, frame 3) shows part of a large area of stratocumulus over the eastern North Pacific Ocean, including a remarkable break or rift in the otherwise nearly uniform cloud mass. The photograph was taken on September 30, 1964, at 1747 GMT and was received at Point Mugu, Calif., via direct readout. North is indicated by the arrow.

No obvious explanation exists for the curious rift in the clouds, but mesoscale gradients of sea-surface temperature may be partially responsible. The rift is located near latitude  $27^{\circ}$  N., and it extends east-west from about  $125^{\circ}$  W. to  $132^{\circ}$  W.—a distance of over 300 n. mi. The

entire area pictured is several hundred miles southwest of California and thus is far from any land. Surface synoptic maps showed the region to be in the southeastern sector of a large eastern Pacific anticyclone, with the few ships in the vicinity reporting north to northeast winds of 10 to 20 kt. and skies overcast or nearly overcast by stratocumulus clouds.

At the time of this photograph TIROS VII was in its 470th day of operation, far surpassing the record of any of the previous TIROS satellites. The picture quality continued to be good, showing little if any noticeable degradation.